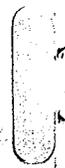


Evacuation To and Through Turkey, Vol 2A, folder 3



11029

BLOOMINGDALE'S
NEW YORK 22

EXECUTIVE OFFICES

April 22, 1944

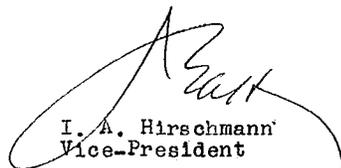
John
JWA

Mr. John W. Pehle, Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Treasury Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear John:

You may wish to have for your files the
attached copy of the representations made
to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by
Ambassador Steinhardt with reference to
the replacement of the Turkish Steamship
Vatan.

Cordially yours



I. A. Hirschmann
Vice-President

lah:ret

COPY

No. 661

U R G E N T

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and, under instructions from its Government, has the honor to inform the Turkish Government that the Government of the United States guarantees to replace the Turkish Steamship VATAN if that vessel is lost while under charter to transport refugees from Rumania to Turkey. The Embassy is authorized to assure the Turkish Government that the vessel which would be furnished by the United States Government in replacement of the VATAN if lost, will be as good or better than that Steamship and that it will be obtained from as nearby waters as possible. In view of the foregoing, the Embassy hopes that the Turkish Government will immediately authorize the owner of the Steamship VATAN to enter into a charter agreement so that the vessel will be available as soon as possible for its humanitarian mission.

L.A.S.

Ankara, February 28, 1944.

REK:AFH

CONTROL COPY

*3 - War Refugee Bd
Mr. Peble*

BJR - 874
This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Governmental agency. (SCOO)

Ankara
Dated ~~March 27~~ ^{March 27} 1944
Rec'd ~~9 a.m.~~ ^{9 a.m.} 29th
Security reasons the text of this message must be kept secret

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 29 1944
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS & RECORDS

Secretary of State,
Washington.

PRIORITY
547, March 27, midnight

FROM THE AMBASSADOR AND HIRSCHMAN FOR THE WRB.
Department's 250, March 24, 10 p.m.

Ankara's 9.

(One) The Turk authorities have now agreed to a charter price of 175,000 Turk pounds (approximately \$97,200) for the projected voyage, eight days being allowed for embarkation and debarkation. For any period of time in excess of eight days required for embarkation or debarkation we will be required to pay 5833 Turk pounds (approximately \$3245) per day. In view of the fact that the Jewish Agency for Palestine had made a firm offer of \$250,000 (repeat dollars) for the charter of the SS VATAN for the projected voyage and was merely awaiting the consent of the Turk Government to the charter, and that we have obtained a desirable passenger vessel in lieu of an old cargo ship which would have required the installation of passenger facilities

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

-2- #547, March 27, midnight, from Ankara.

facilities entailing a delay of two months, and which could not have carried more than half the passengers the SS TARI will take, we consider the price now agreed upon to be extremely favorable having regard to the exorbitant prices demanded for charters in these waters. Our financial negotiations were made difficult by the price offered the Turks for the SS VATAN. Black, who has been present throughout the negotiations, regards the price finally agreed upon as reasonable under all of the circumstances.

(Two) The Turk Government will not (repeat not) accept a replacement guarantee on the basis of "a cargo vessel of comparable age and tonnage" for the SS TARI, which is one of its six available desirable passenger vessels. The Turk Government requires a guarantee that the SS TARI will be replaced with a similar passenger vessel of comparable age and tonnage.

(Three) We, too, are assuming that there will be refugees available for evacuation when the voyage is undertaken and are relying on assurances to this effect from the representative of the Jewish Agency in Istanbul, the representative of the International Red Cross in Bucharest and the Rumanian Minister in Ankara. Obviously
having no

-3- #547, March 27, midnight, from Ankara,

having no control over the movement and departure of refugees Rumania at this time, we are in no better position than the Board to give positive assurances on this subject.

(Four) In view of the conditions of the charter which provides, as stated above, for additional payments in the event of delays in embarkation or debarkation on a daily basis, the Board will be in a position to terminate excessive delays should the cost become too great. In this connection based on experience in this part of the world and existing conditions, we feel obligated to invite the attention of the Board to the probability of very great delay in connection with embarkation resulting either from failure of safe conducts to arrive, difficulties in moving prospective refugees to the port of Constanza, or other difficulties in connection with the documentation of refugees. In our opinion only exceptionally favorable circumstances will permit of the completion of the projected voyage within two months.

(Five) We invite the attention of the Board to the fact that we have now taken every step which it is within our power to take to obtain the German safe conduct. As the representative of the International Red Cross in

Ankara

-4- #547, March 27, midnight, from Ankara.

Ankara informs us that he has received word from Geneva that there will be considerable delay in obtaining the German safe conduct and as the TARI which will be prepared to sail within a week, will not be permitted to depart until the German safe conduct is forthcoming, we urge the Board to exert every possible effort towards expediting the German safe conduct.

✓
STEINHARDT

JT

[Handwritten signature]

DVK-317
This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency. (30-00)

Ankara

Dated March 3, 1944

Rec'd 4:55 p.m., 4th

Secretary of State,
Washington.

380, March 3, 6 p.m.

Department's 146, February 25.

While expressing their desire to cooperate the Turk authorities are reluctant to commit themselves to any further increase in rail transit facilities through Turkey to Palestine for Jewish refugees from the Balkans until the facilities they have already granted are availed of. To be specific the Turk authorities have authorized the issuance of many more Turk transit visas than have been utilized thus far and have offered to provide more rail transportation facilities than we have been able to avail ourselves of up to the present time. The authorities feel that until the visa and rail transit facilities already placed at our disposal have been availed of any discussion of additional visas, rail facilities or the setting up of camps serves no useful purpose. They have, however, assured us that if and when the visas and rail facilities available to us are no longer sufficient they will be prepared to discuss ways and means of dealing with the situation. In connection with the foregoing I do not know whether the War Refugee Board is aware of the fact that the Turk authorities have authorized transit visas for five thousand Jewish refugees en route to Palestine but that it has not been possible to use more than a fraction of these visas due to the obstacles which up to the present time have been placed in the way of the departure of Jewish refugees from the Axis occupied countries and to administrative delays. Very recently the restrictions in Bulgaria preventing the departure of Jewish refugees have been somewhat relaxed. Unless, therefore, new obstacles are encountered I am hopeful that we will be able to materially increase the movement in the near future.

The foregoing applies, of course, only to transit by rail through Turkey. Insofar as concerns the evacuation of Jewish refugees by sea from Rumanian or Bulgarian ports the Turk authorities have agreed to reopen negotiations for the charter of the SS VATAN on the basis of the guarantee of replacement which I have conveyed to the Turk Government in writing. At the same time we have opened negotiations with the Minister of Communications with whom I spoke yesterday for the proposed purchase by the War Refugee Board of the SS NECAT at a cost of approximately \$400,000 the vessel to be donated to the Turk Red Crescent and to become its property after completing the transportation to Palestine under the auspices of the International Red Cross of 5,000

1100300

389
ST. LOUIS, MO.
MARCH 3, 1942
TELETYPE UNIT
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

-2- #80, March 3, 5 p.m., from Ankara.

Jew refugee children from Rumania. We estimate that the purchase price of this vessel would be approximately the same as the cost of transporting 5,000 children by a vessel under charter and that by the donation of the vessel we might be able to persuade the Turk Red Crescent to continue the vessel in operation to carry additional refugees after the agreement to transport the 5,000 children has been carried out.

In view of the fact that the proposed charter of the SS VATAN and proposed purchase of the SS HECAT cannot be regarded as other than pending negotiations and insurmountable delays are invariably encountered in carrying on negotiations in this part of the world I renew my urgent recommendation that a Swedish vessel preferable one already in near Eastern waters be chartered immediately by the War Refugee Board and diverted to Istanbul at the earliest possible moment.

It would appear from the telegrams received by Hirschmann and myself that the War Refugee Board is under the impression that the principal difficulty with which we have been confronted has been a reluctance on the part of the Turk Government to cooperate. Thus far this has not been the case. Up to the present time our principal difficulty has been the refusal of the Axis authorities in the Balkans to permit Jewish refugees to depart. While transportation continues to present serious difficulties this should not be insurmountable provided the departure of Jew refugees from the Balkans in increasing numbers can be effected.

I have not hesitated to discuss the entire subject fully and freely with the Foreign Office, the Minister of Communications and other high Turk Government officials for the reason advanced by the Department that my discussions on this subject have no relationship to Turkey's role in the war. In so doing I have made the policy of our Government of which the War Refugee Board is the instrument unmistakably clear to the Turk Government. Accordingly, I have felt free to press the Turks to lend us their fullest cooperation.

Hirschman has been extremely active and diligent and has acquired a thorough grasp of the situation in a surprisingly short time in consequence of which I feel that considerable progress has been made during the past two weeks.

STEINHAARDT

EDA

cc: Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Messrs. Abrahamson, Bernstein, DuBois, Friedman, Gas ton, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, McCormack, Paul, Pehle, Pollak, Stewart, H. D. White, Misses Hodel and Laughlin, Mrs. Cohn

MAR 2 1944

Dear Art:

Attached is the letter to Admiral Land embodying our request that a War Shipping Administration representative be sent from Cairo to Ankara to assist Ira Hirschmann on the shipping problem. I hope it follows your ideas on the subject and is in line with our discussion of February 29, 1944.

We are advising Hirschmann of our efforts to obtain a WSA man to help him, and we are calling to his attention the potentialities of the "S.S. Izmir", trading between Greece and Turkey. We are also going into the Irish question along the lines which we discussed.

Thank you again for your assistance and please express my appreciation to Mr. Sasseville.

Very truly yours,

J. W. Pehle

Arthur M. Becker, Lt. Commander USNR
Assistant General Counsel
War Shipping Administration, Room 4717
Department of Commerce
Washington, D. C.

JHMurphy:dh 2/29/44

JHM 987

0 0 0 3 0 0

MAR 2 1944

My dear Admiral Landt

Thank you very much for your letter of February 23, 1933, with respect to guaranteeing to the Turkish Government the replacement of the "S.S. Vatan" should it be lost in the transportation of refugees. Your expedition and farsighted action has enabled us to advise our representative, Mr. Hirschmann, to approach the Turkish Government on the basis of this guaranty, and we now have high hopes of success in this humanitarian endeavor.

Our representative in Turkey will undoubtedly find it necessary, upon many occasions, to deal with problems involving a knowledge of ships and shipping. One of the greatest opportunities for saving many lives exists in the areas adjacent to Turkey and the Black Sea. As we have indicated to you there are in Transnistria, Rumania and Bulgaria, substantial numbers of refugees in imminent danger of death who probably can be brought to Turkey if necessary transportation be found. It is indispensable that such transportation be found as soon as possible, and we are presently negotiating with the Swedish and Turkish Governments to this end.

In view of the foregoing I am convinced that Mr. Hirschmann's efforts to solve this most urgent problem would be greatly facilitated if he had the active assistance in Turkey of a man who has a thorough knowledge of the detailed and intricate subject of shipping. In this connection, I understand that the War Shipping Administration has representatives in Cairo, Egypt. I should like to inquire whether it would be possible to secure the assignment, on a temporary basis, of one of these persons to assist Hirschmann with the shipping problems which now confront him. From my dealings with you and your staff, I feel that someone from the War Shipping Administration would be by far the best qualified to give us this help.

Let me thank you again for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle
J. W. Pehle,
Acting Executive Director

237

JHM:bbk - 2/29/44

0 0 0 3 0 0

WAR SHIPPING ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON

February 23, 1944

Mr. John W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

Attached hereto is a letter signed by Admiral Land in reply to your memorandum of February 23.

It is understood that if the vessel is actually replaced, you will obtain the consent of the White House if we at that time believe such consent is necessary.

Sincerely yours,


Arthur M. Becker
Lt. Comdr., USNR
Assistant General Counsel

Enclosure

CC: Chauncey (for Secy's. file), Paul, White, Luxford,
DuBois, Hodel, Lesser, Friedman, Stewart, E.M. Bernstein,
Gaston, Pollak, Bundy (copy of attachment only).

000310

WAR SHIPPING ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON

ADMINISTRATOR

FEB 23 1944

Mr. John W. Pchle
Acting Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

This is in reply to your memorandum of February 23, attaching a copy of the cable received from Hirschmann, representative of the War Refugee Board in Turkey.

In said cable it is indicated that if the United States can offer to the Turkish Government a guaranty to replace the vessel referred to therein, if the same is lost, it is believed that the Turkish Government might permit the use of the ship for the purposes indicated.

The War Shipping Administration may, as a lend lease transaction, with the approval of the Foreign Economic Administration, replace this vessel if the same is lost, with a vessel as similar and from as nearby waters as may be available. The War Shipping Administration will replace the vessel under those circumstances and you are authorized to commit this Administration to such a replacement plan. It is understood that before the vessel is actually replaced, the consent of the Foreign Economic Administration will be obtained and the War Shipping Administration will be reimbursed for the reasonable value of any vessel delivered as a replacement.

Sincerely yours,



E. S. Land
Administrator

100311

FEB 26 1944

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am sending you herewith our report of developments for the week of February 21-26.

We are particularly proud of what we were able to do on Ira Hirschman's request for help on the shipping situation in Turkey. Late Tuesday we received Hirschman's cable informing us that a 3,700 ton vessel, the "SS Vatan", might be chartered to bring 800 to 1,000 refugees out to Istanbul, provided a guarantee were given the Turkish Government that the vessel, if lost, would be replaced by one of comparable tonnage. That same day we arranged to have Stettinius call Admiral Land to "pave the way" and the next day at 10 a.m. DuBois and I talked with Land. Before the day was over, we had a letter from Land authorizing us to commit the War Shipping Administration to the replacement desired by the Turkish Government, subject to clearance with Lend Lease. We obtained clearance from Lend Lease the same day and drafted a cable to Hirschman which was sent to State the following morning. We regard this as a most significant precedent in so far as our shipping problems are concerned. It should also operate to facilitate Hirschman's dealings with the Turks and help an actual evacuation get under way at once.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

Honorable Henry Morgenthau, Jr.,

Secretary of the Treasury.

JWP
Fhed:shd 2/25/44

000312

Y
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Washington 25, D. C.

February 22, 1954

Mr. J. S. Jasso, Jr.
Room 178
Treasury Department
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Joe:

Thank you for the cable to Stockholm and Richardson about the S. Yaman.

I will appreciate it if you will keep me informed about this, including the terms of the charter if it is effected.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Oscar Cox

General Counsel

cc - Miss Gannoy (for the Secretary), Mr. Ford, Mr. White, Mr. Boston, Mr. Felt, Mr. Ladd, Mr. E. A. Bernstein, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Lauer, Miss Godel, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Tuller, and Miss Laughlin.

000313

cc: Chauncey (for Sec'y)

Paul
Gaston
White
Pehle
Luxford
DuBois
E.M. Bernstein
Stewart
Lesser
Friedman
Miss Hodel
Pollak
Bundy

000314

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
OTHER THAN A GOVERNMENTAL
AGENCY. (17-00)

TELEGRAM 2-25-44
February 25, 1944

4 p.m.

AMEMBASSY,

CONTROL COPY

ANKARA.

144

FOR STEINHARDT AND HIRSCHMAN FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

Refer your 282, February 18, and your 299, February 19.

The United States Government through the War Shipping Administration and the Foreign Economic Administration guarantees to replace the vessel referred to in your 282 if the same is lost. Although we can not furnish you with an exact description at this time of any specific vessel which will be used as a replacement, the Turkish Government may be assured that this vessel will be as good or better than the S.S. VATAN and that it will be obtained from as nearby waters as possible.

It is assumed that the S.S. VATAN will be insured against loss thus enabling the proceeds of the insurance to be used in connection with the replacement. For your information, the War Refugee Board can, if necessary, arrange for the insurance of the S.S. VATAN.

The Foreign Economic Administration has advised us that their representative in Ankara, Michel Cardoza, can be of assistance to you in effecting necessary arrangements with the Turkish Government.

For

000315

-2- #144, February 25, 4 p.m., to Ankara

For your information and the information of Cardozo, we have been advised that if the S. S. VALERIE is actually replaced, the replacement will be done under lend lease authority and could be done in one of two ways. Either the replacing vessel could be turned over as a normal lend lease transaction or could be sold to the Turkish Government for cash.

It is expected that you will take this opportunity to emphasize to the Turkish Government the significance of the concrete offers which this Government has already made to them in connection with the program of the War Refugee Board. In addition to the present guaranty to replace the S.S. VALERIE if lost in connection with the carrying out of this program, we have previously offered to arrange for financing the support and maintenance of refugees coming into Turkey. We hope that the Turkish Government will accordingly make the S.S. VALERIE immediately available for this mission of mercy.

STEPHENSON
(Acting)
(CEN)
ACTING

WRB:GLM:RG
2/25/44

DE

NEA

EH

SM

U

000316

February 24, 1944

To: Mr. Stettinius

From: J. W. Pehle

Attention: Mr. Warren

Please transmit the attached urgent cable from the War Refugee Board to Ambassador Steinhardt and Hirschmann. The commitment to replace the Turkish vessel has the approval of Admiral Land, Administrator of the War Shipping Administration, and Leo T. Crowley, Administrator of the Foreign Economic Administration.

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

 JED:JWP:mgt 2/24/44

000317

URGENT

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT, ANKARA, TURKEY.

FOR STEINHARDT AND HIRSCHMANN FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

Refer your 282, February 18, and your 299, February 19.

The United States Government through the War Shipping Administration and the Foreign Economic Administration guarantees to replace the vessel referred to in your 282 if the same is lost. Although we can not furnish you with an exact description at this time of any specific vessel which will be used as a replacement, the Turkish Government may be assured that this vessel will be as good or better than the S.S. VATAN and that it will be obtained from as nearby waters as possible.

It is assumed that the S.S. VATAN will be insured against loss thus enabling the proceeds of the insurance to be used in connection with the replacement. For your information, the War Refugee Board can, if necessary, arrange for the insurance of the S.S. VATAN.

The Foreign Economic Administration has advised us that their representative in Ankara, Michel Cardoza, can be of assistance to you in effecting necessary arrangements with the Turkish Government.

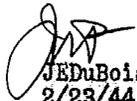
For your information and the information of Cardoza, we have been advised that if the S.S. VATAN is actually replaced, the replacement will be done under lend lease authority and could be done in one of two ways. Either the replacing vessel could be turned over as a normal lend lease transaction or could be sold to the Turkish Government for cash.

It is expected that you will take this opportunity to emphasize to the Turkish Government the significance of the concrete offers which this Government has already made to them in connection with the program of the War Refugee Board. In addition to the present guaranty to replace the S.S. VATAN if lost in connection with the carrying out of this program, we have previously offered to arrange for financing the support and maintenance of refugees coming into Turkey. If the Turkish Government is really anxious to cooperate in this matter their failure to make the S.S. Vatan immediately available for this

- 2 -

mission of mercy would be difficult to understand.

We are working on the matter of the Swedish ships and will keep you informed of the developments.


JEDuBois:ecr
2/23/44

000319

CONTROL COPY

TELEGRAM SENT

*W. W. Refugee
Bd (Mr. Goble)*

This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government Agency. (BR)

February 28, 1944

U.S. URGENT

7 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF
FEB 28 1944
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

To: AMEMBASSY,
ANKARA.

148

FOR HIRSCHMANN FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

We recognize fully the importance and urgency of the shipping problem and are doing what we can here to solve it.

We have discussed with the Swedish Minister here the possibility of using Swedish vessels to evacuate refugees from Black Sea ports. The Swedish Minister is cabling his Government immediately requesting that consideration be given to this matter.

With respect to the guarantee which this Government has now given to replace the S.S. Vatan if lost, we would like immediate advice from you as to the possibilities of obtaining other Turkish vessels if similar guarantees were given to replace those vessels.

STETTINIUS

Acting

(CLW)

WRB:GLW:VHJ NOE NEA SWP

FEB 24 1944

TO: Mr. Stettinius

FROM: Mr. Pehle

Attention: Mr. Warren

It will be appreciated if you will have the attached
cable to Turkey dispatched immediately.

(Signed) J.W. Pehle

Attachment.

(Sent via Special Messenger)

CC - Mr. Pehle, Mr. Luxford, Mr. DuBois, Mr. Lesser, Mr. Friedman,
Miss Hodel, Mr. Pollak

EW
FHodel:hd 2/24/44

1032

URGENT

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT, ANKARA, TURKEY.

FOR STEINHARDT AND HIRSCHMANN FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

We recognize fully the importance and urgency of the shipping problem and are doing what we can here to solve it.

We have discussed with the Swedish Minister here the possibility of using Swedish vessels to evacuate refugees from Black Sea ports. The Swedish Minister is cabling his Government immediately requesting that consideration be given to this matter.

With respect to the guarantee which this Government has now given to replace the S.S. VATAN if lost, we would like immediate advice from you as to the possibilities of obtaining other Turkish vessels if similar guarantees were given to replace those vessels.

JED:ecr
JME/24/44

FOREIGN ECONOMIC ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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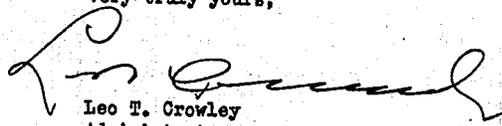
FEB 24 1944

Mr. John W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I am enclosing for your information a copy of a letter sent to the War Shipping Administrator in which the Foreign Economic Administration has assured the War Shipping Administration that if the S.S. Vatan is chartered for the War Refugee Board the vessel may be replaced under lend-lease authority upon the request of the Turkish Government and that the War Shipping Administration will be reimbursed by the Foreign Economic Administration for the reasonable value of the replacement vessel.

Very truly yours,


Leo T. Crowley
Administrator

Copies 3/8/44 - Miss Chauncey (for the Secretary), Messrs. Paul, White, Gaston, Pehle, Luxford, DuBois, EMBernstein, Friedman, Lesser, Stewart, Abrahamson, Pollack, and Misses Hodel, Laughlin and Cohn.

1032

78
RECEIVED
OFFICE
MAR 1 1944

FFR 24 1944

Honorable Emory S. Land
Administrator
War Shipping Administration
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Admiral Land:

We have seen a copy of your letter of February 23, 1944, to Mr. John W. Fehle, Acting Executive Director of the War Refugee Board and a cable dated February 18, 1944, from Mr. Hirschmann, representative of the War Refugee Board in Turkey to Mr. Fehle, concerning the chartering of the S. S. Vatan, a Turkish vessel, for use in rescuing refugees.

According to Mr. Hirschmann, it is believed that the Turkish Government will permit the S. S. Vatan to be chartered for the purpose of transporting refugees providing that the United States can offer to the Turkish Government a guaranty that this vessel will be replaced if it is lost while under charter. We understand that the War Shipping Administration has authorized Mr. Fehle, subject to approval by the Foreign Economic Administration, to commit it to replace this vessel, in the event of its loss, with a vessel as similar and from as nearby waters as may be available. We understand further that you wish assurance both that lend-lease authorization for such a replacement will be forthcoming and that lend-lease funds will be made available to the War Shipping Administration for reimbursement for the reasonable value of any vessel delivered as replacement.

The Foreign Economic Administration concurs in the desirability of effectuating the charter of the S. S. Vatan for the purpose mentioned and is prepared to give assurance both that upon the request of the Turkish Government, this vessel may be replaced under lend-lease authority, and that in such a case you will be reimbursed for the reasonable value of any vessel which you may deliver as a replacement. All questions between ourselves and the Turkish Government, however, as to the terms of replacement are reserved.

Very truly yours,

(Signed: Leo T. Crowley)

Leo T. Crowley
Administrator

0000000000:MPZarky:rsf
2/24/44

Official File Copy

February 23, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL LAND

Attached is a cable received from Hirschman, representative of the War Refugee Board in Turkey who was appointed pursuant to the President's Executive Order of January 22 declaring that it is the policy of this Government to take all measures within its power consistent with the successful prosecution of the war to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death.

You will note that Hirschman indicates that it is possible to rescue 800 to 1,000 refugees, mainly children, from Transnistria who are in danger of starvation and death if the charter of the S.S. WATAN owned by Kalkawan Riza, Turkish shipowner, can be obtained at once. It appears that the Turkish Government refuses to permit the owner to enter into the charter because of the danger of the loss of the ship. The International Red Cross has promised to secure safe conduct of this ship from all the belligerent powers concerned. Hirschman indicates that if we could offer to the Turkish Government a guarantee to replace the ship if lost, there are good reasons to believe that the Turkish Government might permit the use of the ship for the purpose indicated.

J. P. [Signature]

[Handwritten initials]

JEDuBois:ecr
2/29/44

RH-877

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Governmental
agency. (BR)

Ankara

Dated February 18, 1944

Rec'd 2:24 a.m., 19th

Secretary of State

Washington

262, February 18, 11 a.m.

FOR JOHN PEBBLE DIRECTOR OF WAR REFUGEE BOARD
FROM HINSCHMANN.

I am gradually getting a picture of some of the possibilities and of the enormous difficulties facing our work. Although the Turks express themselves as sympathetic thus far they have been helpful only to a limited extent. They may be due to some of the circumstances recited below. In dealing with the Turks I shall rely entirely on Ambassador Steinhardt who enjoys their full confidence.

Bulgaria through which almost all refugees from Europe and the Balkans must pass in transit to Turkey or beyond has for quite some time past been withholding transit visas for those coming from other

RECEIVED
OFFICE OF THE
COMMISSIONER OF
IMMIGRATION AND
NATURALIZATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.

-2- 282, February 18, 11 a.m. from Ankara

from other parts of Europe and the Balkans and withholds exit visas from Jews residing in Bulgaria. In the past fortnight only one Jewish family succeeded in leaving Bulgaria and reaching Istanbul.

While I hoped that we would not have to avail ourselves immediately of the special authority to deal with the enemy I feel that you in Washington and we here will be compelled to use this means.

The satellite countries namely Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria are most anxious to whitewash themselves in the eyes of the Allies. We must exploit this anxiety at once. We must bring every pressure brought to bear through neutral agencies or any other means at your disposal, as well as by direct contact with the representative of the above mentioned satellites. They must be given to understand in no uncertain terms that unless they take immediate steps which will facilitate our work the Allies will look upon them as real enemies who are fully collaborating with the Nazis in their work of extermination and that this will be held against them when the war is over.

-4- 282, February 18, 11 a.m. from Ankara

of starvation and death. International Red Cross promises to procure safe conduct for this ship from all belligerent powers concerned. The Turkish Government fully controls all private shipping and is faced with extreme transport difficulties of its own. It refuses to permit owner to enter into Charter Agreement because of danger of loss of ship even when under safe conduct as has occurred.

To overcome anxiety as to possible loss of ship, we strongly urge immediate offer of guarantee by the United States to the Turkish Government to replace ship. Will you cable us authority to offer this specific guarantee of ship replacement immediately from nearest waters which please designate in your reply in order to reopen negotiations on this question of Turkish ship. Have reasons to believe that this guarantee would offer basis for reopening question. As an alternative there are Swedish ships carrying food from Canada to Greece under the auspices of Swedish Red Cross. The exact number is unknown here. Complete information on this is available only at Stockholm which I suggest you procure

-5- 232, February 18, 11 a.m. from Ankara

you procure at once. These empty Swedish ships could possibly proceed from Greece to Constanza and transport some refugees. Turkish officials suggest this alternative plan. We prefer first plan as it would save time in a situation which can disintegrate quickly. Also once this ship is allowed the first voyage and accomplishes voyage successfully we can work to continue these trips to save additional refugees.

Please also explore at once the possible use of other neutral ships from Portugal or Spain. The point is that we must under all circumstances get a ship at once.

Please advise.

STEINHARDT

EDA

CONTROL COPY

AHC-170

This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government Agency. (BR)

Ankara

Dated February 19, 1944

Rec'd 10:39 p.m.

Secretary of State,

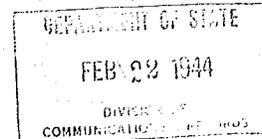
Washington.

299 February 19, 9 p.m.

FROM HIRSCHMAN FOR JOHN PEHELE

Referring to my telegram of February 18 regarding the desperate need for a boat immediately to evacuate refugees from Constanza to Istanbul further explorations indicate that Turks are consistently slow in making decisions or taking action even though we hope to secure from you authority to offer to replace the ship VATAN in the event of loss,

While I would not under any circumstances suggest that you relax your efforts in trying through every means to help us secure this boat I now believe that our best immediate hope is to get a boat through the Swedish Government and I would urge that to put more emphasis on your efforts in this direction than indicated in my previous telegram. I am seeing the Swedish Minister here with Red Cross official and trust you will push action through Washington to Sweden with all vigor also you will be interested to learn that Ambassador Steinhardt had a talk on February 18 with the British



-2- #299, February 19, 9 p.m., from Ankara

the British Ambassador who has agreed to send a note to the Foreign Office concerning the plight of Jews in France of Turkish origin. The note will be presented to one of the higher officials of the Foreign Office by a member of his staff who in discussing the subject with him will indicate that the British Government supports the request made by Ambassador Steinhardt on two previous occasions on the Foreign Minister to make the necessary representations to the Vichy Government that Jews of Turkish origin be not expelled from France.

As you undoubtedly know the 10,000 Jews were allegedly divested of their Turkish nationality by operation of Turkish law. We are importuning the Turkish authorities to interest themselves to the point of protecting these 10,000 Jews of Turkish origin now in France to save them from being deported to Poland.

Also I have asked the Soviet Embassy here to help in the matter of securing detailed information regarding the causes of the bottleneck situation in Bulgaria.

STEINHARDT

EDA